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ABSTRACT

This publication offers teachers and principals a program for customizing schooling to individual students' learning needs and motivating them to take increased responsibility for deciding what and how to learn. It presents a comprehensive framework for introducing self-directed learning (SDL) approaches in the classroom. Nine chapters include: (1) "The Case for Self-Directed Learning" (e.g., how research supports SDL and the major principles of SDL programs); (2) "A Framework for Teaching SDL" (e.g., defining the course and building independent thinking skills); (3) "Rethinking Student Coursework" (e.g., essential planning steps and understanding the stages of SDL); (4) "Planning Lessons and Projects" (e.g., principles for planning lessons, creating experiences, and promoting study); (5) "Teaching Independent Thinking" (e.g., inviting inquiry and initiative and developing problem-solving skills); (6) "Negotiating Student Learning Agreements" (e.g., the learning agreement or contract and contract elements); (7) "Motivating and Empowering Students" (e.g., encouraging students to pursue SDL and working with difficult students); (8) "Assessing Student Achievement" (e.g., assessing general skills and coursework); and (9) "Pursuing a Path of Excellence" (e.g., starting an SDL school and creating a shared vision). Ten resources present support materials. (Contains 75 bibliographic references.) (SM)